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Meeting Log - March 20, 1997

Submitted by Alan H. Schoem, Executive Assistant, Office of Compliance

Alan Schoem spoke to the Plastic Shipping Container Institute on March 10, 1997, about the Commission's activities on 5-gallon buckets.

After reviewing the Commission's involvement with 5-gallon buckets, Mr. Schoem provided **preliminary** results of the staff's monitoring conformance with the ASTM labeling standard for 4-6 gallon buckets. The **preliminary** results are as follows:

CPSC staff looked at 4 to 6 gallon buckets in retail stores, including paint stores, hardware stores, bulk sections of grocery stores, club stores (Price and Sam's Clubs), and fast food restaurants including donut shops.

We looked at 565 buckets. More than 2/3 or 390 buckets were labeled according to the voluntary standard - meaning at least an English language label.

Many manufacturers had at least a few unlabeled buckets - a few of the buckets were older buckets produced in 1991 and 1992 so the absence of labels on those buckets was not entirely unexpected. At least 30% of the unlabeled buckets, however, were produced in 1995 and 1996. A number of these buckets were manufactured by PSCI members. In some cases, a bucket produced in 1995, was labeled, and a bucket produced in 1996, by the same manufacturer and used by the same filler as the labeled 1995 bucket, did not have a label.

In most cases, whether a label was present appeared to depend more on the contents of the bucket than on the manufacturer. Of the 175 unlabeled buckets, 40% or 69 buckets contained paint or primer. This was the largest industry found to have unlabeled buckets followed by the food industry with 11% or 20 unlabeled buckets. In descending order, the other types of buckets found to be unlabeled were bonding/adhesives, and driveway sealers (11 each), empty buckets (9), roof coat/cement (6), transmission fluids/motor fluids, laundry detergent (4 each), joint compound, and water repellant solutions (3 each), bird seed, grass seed, and cement mix (2 each), anchor line and stone mix (1 each).

The CPSC staff has seen deaths with buckets containing virtually all of the types of content found in unlabeled buckets. We know of 15 deaths or injuries with buckets originally containing paint, 13 deaths or injuries with buckets containing food, 13 deaths in buckets containing joint compound, seven deaths with buckets containing transmission or motor fluid, three deaths and two injuries with buckets sold empty, one death with a bucket containing adhesives, one with roof coating, and a near

drowning with a bucket containing bird seed.

Mr. Schoem said the data indicated consumers use 5-gallon buckets for many purposes and they don't always need a perfectly clean bucket for the chosen purpose.

Mr. Schoem discussed options available to the staff if it continued to see unlabeled buckets. Mr. Schoem said the staff would be notifying those manufacturers and industries whose buckets were found to be unlabeled so that they could take steps to conform to the ASTM standard.

Mr. Schoem stated that the staff wanted to work cooperatively with PSCI, fillers and the rest of the bucket industry. Mr. Schoem said he believed PSCI and its members were committed to labeling and educating consumers of the danger of bucket drownings. Mr. Schoem expressed the view that labeling alone was not sufficient but that labeling and education could address the risk of drowning in 5-gallon buckets.

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TO: Sadye E. Dunn at CPSC-HQ1

TO: Rocky X. Hammond at CPSC-HQ1

Subject: Meeting Log attached

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